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General and complete disarmament: implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction

Security Council
Seventy-third year

Letter dated 20 April 2018 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Czechia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

With reference to document A/72/828-S/2018/314, containing the letter of Mr. Vassily Nebenzia, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations, and forwarding a statement by the official spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation regarding the "Novichok" chemical agent, I cannot but to react to this document, in which the Czech Republic is mentioned without sufficient grounds and any relation whatsoever to the central issue, i.e. the possible implication of Russia in the chemical attack in the United Kingdom on 4 March 2018, and to inform you of the position of the Czech Republic.

The Czech Republic rejects the manipulative insinuations spread by the Russian Federation in statements of their representatives linking the Czech Republic with the research or development of the "Novichok" chemical agent. In that vein, we express deep concern about the statement of the official spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, designed only to divert international attention from the investigation by the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) in the Skripal case.

Not only does the above-mentioned statement contain false and misleading information, but it also, in a most unfortunate manner, echoes the language prevalent in the infamous Cold War era. It is exactly this emerging behaviour that the Secretary-General himself has recently issued a stern warning against.

We cannot but reiterate that insinuations of the kind used in the Russian document of 6 April 2018 are groundless. As has been declared several times by Czech authorities, including by the State Office of Nuclear Safety of the Czech Republic, a national regulatory body responsible for governmental supervision in the Chemical Weapons Convention field, the Czech Republic does not own, manufacture

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or develop chemical weapons. This was stated in our initial declaration and in other regular declarations sent to OPCW in compliance with the Convention.

The Czech Republic fulfils all its international commitments concerning the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. It is perfectly clear that the manipulative claims directed at the Czech Republic during the investigation of the Salisbury attack are not based on truth and are in fact completely fictional.

The Czech Republic has a long and internationally acclaimed tradition and competence in the field of military medicine and, in particular, that of protection against weapons of mass destruction. Several military scientific facilities for the purpose of science development in these fields exist in the Czech Republic.

The activities of these scientific and educational facilities are pursued in full compliance with our national legislation and with the Constitution of the Czech Republic as well as our international commitments, including namely those under the Chemical Weapons Convention. Their activities are entirely transparent; information about them is accessible to the Czech as well as to the foreign public, inter alia through their respective websites.

I would like to ask that the present letter be circulated as an official document of the Security Council and of the General Assembly under agenda item 99 (l).

(*Signed*) Jiri **Ellinger**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.